

10/10/55

County Water Committee In First Session

Water Supply
Members of the county's new water advisory committee met this morning with the board of supervisors, discussed some fundamental water problems, and set October 18 at 9 a. m. as the time for their original meeting.

The committee was recently appointed by the board to advise it in administering the newly created Santa Cruz county flood control and water conservation district, set up by the last legislature.

On hand today were: Harvey Edmund, retired public utility executive; Irvin Dethlefsen, Watsonville shipper and grower; Charles McLean, Davenport; Earl Harris, representing the San Lorenzo valley; and H. N. Ormsbee, member of the disbanded county water committee and an expert on water problems. Ralph Mattison, also appointed to the committee, was unable to attend today's session.

Main topic of discussion was who the committee should consult for legal advice. Supervisor W. A. Deans said there was no fully qualified water law expert in the county and suggested that the committee go to work with some local attorney, who could develop into such an expert.

Several board members pointed out that Ernest Wilson, of the San Mateo law firm of Kirkbride and Wilson, has offered to aid the county.

Supervisor Gus E. Wahlberg suggested that Jerry Stanley, who has resigned as assistant district attorney, be hired by the committee.

Board members said they would go along with suggestions from the committee regarding legal counsel.

A suggestion that Planning Commission Secretary William Weybright be drafted to act as the water committee secretary was rejected by the board, which was advised by Supervisor Francis Silliman that the commission needs Weybright full time. Supervisor Frank Clement suggested that Harold Jackson, the supervisors' secretary, be used by the water committee, and committeemen approved.

Ormsbee outlined the basic surface water problem the county faces, commenting that during summer months most of the creeks do not carry enough water to solve the problem.

He suggested also that Rep. Charles Gubser be called in to outline to the committee federal legislation aimed at water conservation and flood control.

Ormsbee commented also that there are enough engineering surveys now on hand to provide the committee with necessary information. He said an engineer could be contacted when time comes to go ahead with construction projects. He suggested Warren Hunt of San Jose as a good man to consult.

Clement urged committeemen to contact the Santa Cruz city council for talk about the new district. The city objected to many aspects of the measure that created the district.

Next week's organizational meeting was scheduled to be held in the supervisors' room of the court house annex.